

BOOK NOTICE

Source Book of Biological Terms. By Axel Leonard Melander, Department of Biology, The City College, The College of the City of New York, 1937. 8.5 × 5.5 in. VI + 157 p. \$1.10.

This book, by all means, should be owned and consulted by everyone who has any curiosity at all about biological terms in current use. It is really a series of short adventures into the romance, sources, evolution, phylogeny and origin of words used in biology. And in addition, the author has written short chapters on uncertain and mistaken derivations, ancient customs and biological beliefs, unnatural history, accentuation, pronunciation, suffixes, prefixes, plurals, etc., all dealing with biological words and terms. And lastly, there is an "Alphabetical List of the Components of Biological Vocabulary."

Knowing the history and meaning of the scientific words one uses, affords added interest and pleasure to both amateur and professional biologists. For example, the name of the book louse *Troctes divinatorius* means literally, "an instinctive epicure." And the word toadstool is a Germanic term meaning "death sprout," and has nothing to do with a seat for toads. In addition, if this book had been available years ago, many of us would not have been taught so many mispronunciations by our professors, nor would such careless usage have become so fixed as to seem correct.

Professor Melander's book is both instructive and entertaining, and it gains by the latter quality because it is easy to remember something that is aptly and whimsically written. Even some of the page headings of the second portion have an amusing appeal—Brachy to Butter, Buzzard to Camel, Flagellum to Fox, Growth to Halibut, Serpent to Siphon, Vermis to Viper, etc.—H. B. W.